

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15 OMB-01 SSM-03 /075 W

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O R 301600Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9829

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC 1069

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 6633

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 30 SYRIAN MEDIA ANNOUNCE CESSATION OF METN
CAMPAIGN

1. MEDIA HIGHLIGHT STATEMENT BY LEBANESE ARMY VANGUARDS
THAT COMBAT IN METN HALTED AS OF 1700L SEPT. 29. PRESS
BANNED: "VANGUARDS OF LEBANESE ARAB ARMY PROCLAIM
RESTORATION OF LAW AND ORDER TO MOUNTAIN REGION. EVACU-
ATION FROM REGION OF DISORDERLY ELEMENTS, AND CEASEFIRE.
LOCAL COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED SO THAT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS
MAY RESUME THEIR DUTIES. SARKIS DISCUSSES REUNIFICATION OF
ARMY ON NEW BASIS." STATEMENT BY VANGUARDS CLAIMED ORDER
RESTORED IN HAMMANA, FALUGHA, MTAYN, AYNTURA, TARSHISH AND
OTHER TOWNS. SAIQA STATEMENT REPORTED REMOVAL
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OF "HUNDREDS OF MINES AND SCORES OF AMERICAN 3.5

CALIBER ROCKETS" FROM REGION, ADDING THAT PATROL
SUFFERED CASUALTIES WHEN MINE EXPLODED. SAIQA ASSERTED
ALL ROADS IN METN AREA NOW OPEN FOR REGULAR USE.
SAIQA RELEASE EMPHASIZED THAT MILITARY OPERATIONS
ACCOMPLISHED WITH MINIMAL LOSS OF LIFE ON ANY SIDE, AND
REPORTED DEFECTON OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO SAIQA WHO
HAD BEEN CONSCRIPTED TO FIGHT IN "CONFESSITIONAL WAR THAT
DOES NOT SERVE CAUSE OF LIBERATING PALESTINE."

2. PRESS REPORTED VISIT OF ALGERIAN MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE BRINGING MESSAGE TO PRES. ASAD FROM ALGIERIAN PRES. BOUMEDIENNE. IN LEBANON, MEDIA NOTED MEETING BETWEEN PRES. SARKIS AND DEPUTY HEAD OF SHIITE ISLAMIC COUNCIL PREVIOUS DAY. NASSERITE ORGANIZATION IN LEBANON ISSUED STATEMENT DENOUNCING CONSPIRATORIAL STRATEGY OF SADAT REGIME.

3. PRESS REPORTED CONTINUING LOCAL REACTION TO SEMIRAMIS OPERATION UNDER CAPTION: "PALESTINIAN AND SYRIAN MASSES DENOUNCE CRIMINAL OPERATION PERFORMED BY TRAITORS IN SEMIRAMIS HOTEL. CONDEMNATION OF DEVIATING COMMANDS CONNIVING WITH FASCIST IRAQI REGIME AND SIGNATORIES OF TREACHEROUS SINAI ACCORD."

4. DEFMIN TLASS WROTE IN TISHRIIN THAT U.S. CHOSE LEBANON AS ARENA FOR IMPLEMENTING ITS SCHEMES AND CUTTING PLO DOWN TO SIZE. HE LISTED THREE AIMS OF U.S. POLICY IN LEBANON: (A) OBSCURE SINAI AGREEMENT, (B) UNDERCUT PLO GOAL OF PROMOTING ESTABLISHMENT OF SECULAR DEMOCRATIC STATE IN PALESTINE, AND (C) PARTITION LEBANON INTO TWO OR MORE STATES. TLASS REVEALED SYRIA HAD CAUTIONED PLO OFFICIALS THAT PALESTINIAN INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANESE FIGHTING WOULD LEAD TO PARTITION OF LEBANON, AND WARNED THAT U.S. WOULD NOT COUNTENANCE ESTABLISHMENT OF MARXIST REGIME IN LEBANON ON JUMBLATTI PATTERN. TLASS SUGGESTED PALESTINIANS SHOULD AVOID REPEATING MISTAKE THEY MADE IN JORDAN WHEN THEY ASSERTED ROAD TO PALESTINE PASSED THROUGH AMMAN.

5. COLUMNIST REPEATED ACCUSATION THAT BAGHDAD REGIME
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PLANNED SEMIRAMIS OPERATION AND SUPPLIED GUERRILLAS WITH "INSTRUMENTS OF DESTRUCTION AND ASSASSINATION ALONG WITH STRICT ORDERS THEY DIE IN THE ACT." HE CALLED UPON PALESTINAINS TO PREVENT FURTHER TRANSFORMATION OF THEIR ADHERENTS INTO "HIRED MERCENARIES" FOR EGYPT AND IRAQ. AL-BAATH EDITORIAL ASKED SYRIA TO CHOOSE BETWEEN PERMITTING PLOT TO CONTINUE AND DESTROY LEBANON AND PALESTINIANS, OR PRESERVING LEBANON'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SAFEGUARDING

PALESTINIANS. EDITORIAL ASSERTS THERE NO ROOM FOR HESITATION IN VIEW OF FACT THAT SYRIA'S ADVERSARIES "HAVE NO SERIOUS INTENTION TO HALT FIGHTING WHILE PRESENT SITUATION BEING EXPLOITED TO ABORT PROPOSED SOLUTION."

6. COMMENT: SYRIANS TRYING TO PORTRAY RECENT FIGHTING IN METN AS SPEEDY AFFAIR WHICH RESULTED IN SLIGHT CASUALTIES ON BOTH SIDES. TWO ALTERNATIVES CITED IN AL-BAATH EDITORIAL APPEAR SIMILAR TO CHOICES OUTLINED BY FONMIN KHADDAM TO MFA SENIOR STAFF RECENTLY WHEN HE REPORTEDLY ASSERTED THAT IF SYRIA FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN CLAMPING DOWN ON PALESTINIANS OR ALLOWING PARTITION OF LEBANON, SYRIA WOULD CLAMP DOWN ON PALESTINIANS.

MURPHY

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